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PRICE : FOURPENCE

The People's Education

Published by U. L. F.



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THE PEOPLE'S EDUCATION

U.L.F. Pamphlet No. 11.

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THE PEOPLE'S EDUCATION

Introduction

In spite of the war—the daily changing of the map of the world, the disappearance of great powers and the suppression of their cultures, the exile of kings and governments, the recasting of economic systems—in spite of this major historical upheaval which touches every branch of life, the children must go to school and must be educated.

It is not surprising that in this situation teachers and educationists have been forced to examine the fundamentals of their creed, and, no longer able to dismiss the affairs of the world in trite text-book phrases, are also beginning seriously to question the value of the education now given in the schools.

Innumerable programmes of educational reform have been drawn up by various educational bodies, some good and some bad. More and more books appear on the market, by educationists, clerics and politicians. Headmasters wrangle in the columns of the press about the respective merits of boarding and day schools: the public schools are violently attacked and no less violently defended. The Church laments the flight from religion and criticises the educational system for its lack of a Christian basis.

But it is not only in the educational world that this questioning is going on. Education has become an important political question. The Army criticises the low standard of education of recruits, the R.A.F. searches high and low for young men with a secondary education to train as pilots, industry looks in vain for trained technicians. The Conservative, Liberal, Labour and Communist parties and the Trades Union Congress have all drawn up programmes of educational reform, since the announcement that a new Education Bill may be introduced during the war to open up the way for educational advance.

In the meantime the new awakening of the people in the cause of the war against Fascism has led to a growing popular demand for education—in the Forces, in the Civil Defence Services, among civilians. Secondary school pupils are calling for studies more related to life, students at the universities are criticising their courses and putting forward suggestions for reform.

How can these demands best be met? What are the main obstacles in the way? These are the questions to be answered. Students studying to be teachers have a special responsibility. Education is their profession. What can they do to further united action in the interests of the children and of the people as a whole? What help can they give towards making education the worthy profession that it should be, the very foundation stone of a better future?

The Schools To-Day

In 1842, about 40 per cent. of the people of this country were illiterate. In 1942, a hundred years later—years which have seen some of the greatest developments in history—more than three in every four children leave school at the age of 14 after an education totally inadequate for modern needs. They may be able to read and write, but they are scientifically illiterate—they have had little opportunity to learn about the complex world in which they live.

Under the Education Acts it is the duty of every parent to see that his child receives efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, from the age of 5 until the age of 14. In fact to-day such subjects as history and geography, singing, hygiene, physical training, handicrafts, nature study, are all included in the curriculum of elementary schools. But the conception of education for the mass of the people remains much the same as that embodied in the law—efficient elementary instruction as a preparation for working life in industry. That this is so can be seen by the pattern of the educational system and the possibilities open to children in elementary schools to climb the educational ladder to secondary school and university.

There are some 5,000,000 children in elementary schools, 80 per cent. of whom leave school for work at the age of 14. Only some 14 per cent. manage to get to secondary schools, and their one chance of doing so is success in the Special Place examination taken at the age of 11. This may bring them total or partial remission of fees on the basis of a means test, but many working-class parents cannot afford to allow their children to stay on at school even without paying fees. There are various extras, such as uniform and so on, which mount up, and the child must be fed and clothed for another two years while he is contributing nothing towards the family budget.

In fact under half the 500,000 places in secondary schools are awarded free, some 10 per cent. with partial remission of fees, and the remainder on payment of fees. The limitation of places, this carefully devised selective system, and economic pressure, thus combine to prevent all but a small fraction of working-class children from receiving any further education beyond the elementary school except in evening classes. Provision for technical education is grossly inadequate. In addition over 60 per cent. of secondary school children leave at the age of 16, while only 5 per cent. go on to universities or training departments. The step up to secondary education may mean the chance of gaining School Certificate and so entry to black-coated employment, or minor administrative posts, but only very rarely does it mean a pass to the university.

Meanwhile the children of rich parents may attend an exclusive preparatory school and pass automatically at the age of 13 to a public school. In this private system of schools there is no restriction of places, no cut-throat competition—the only criterion is ability to pay the fees.

The way from public school to university, and thence to the major positions in the State, is clear for those who have been able to afford the only type of education recognised as adequate for positions of power and responsibility.

Development of the Educational System

The educational system as we now know it is of very recent origin. State elementary schools were initiated only 72 years ago—and it was not until near 1900 that places were available for all children in the age groups subject to compulsory education—State secondary education and an organised system of technical education date back only 40 years. The modern public school is only a century old, though it has its roots in the Middle Ages; the universities, with the exception of Oxford and Cambridge, which were founded in the thirteenth century, all date from the nineteenth century.

And most of the great changes in English education took place in the latter half of the last century. Before then England was well established as the leading industrial nation with no competitors in the field, and with a monopoly in the trading of manufactured goods. But industry had not yet developed to a point where some education for the workers was a necessity. It was not until the last quarter of the century that England's monopoly of the world's markets began to be seriously threatened, and that other powers began to invade the field of colonial expansion where she had been supreme. The period of development of free competition under the capitalist system was coming to an end, the first signs of capitalist monopoly and imperialism were beginning to appear; the era of wars and revolutions was soon to begin. It was during this period that a new epoch in educational development opened with the establishment of universal compulsory elementary education and an extension of the facilities for higher education.

A glance at the history of education in this country shows clearly how the development of the schools has depended on general social and political changes, and helps towards an understanding of the present complex system and its social background.

In the middle ages religious bodies were the main agents of education. There were small schools of a kind, attached to monasteries and churches in different parts of the country, and the existing grammar schools were usually attached to a cathedral or church. Oxford and Cambridge were also largely under clerical control, and the professional classes of the medieval world who were trained there studied chiefly theology and law. Latin was the medium of instruction. As the only literate members of society the scholars undertook all educational and administrative duties and it is from this early form of education, with its emphasis on the acquisition of abstract knowledge and on interpretation rather than invention, that many of the characteristics of modern secondary education derive.

The courtier and the soldier tended to despise education as such, and rated much higher the military virtues—physical prowess, courage and a blind loyalty. It was not until much later that England provided a vocational education for the modern equivalent of this class in the public schools. Even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the upper classes either had private tutors or sent their sons to the courtly academies on the continent, where they were specifically prepared for posts at Court, for diplomacy and for higher appointments in the army.

For the remaining class of the population, those whose work was solely manual labour, no education was available. Vocational training of a kind was provided by a rudimentary system of apprenticeship, and later in schools administered by craftsmen's guilds. Out of this system developed the new kind of apprenticeship of the machine age, and the other forms of technical education.

From the fourteenth century onwards the factor determining the development of education has been the growth of the middle class. As the power of this class increased with the expansion of trade and early industry so also did its influence on all aspects of the national life. The Church gradually began to lose its exclusive control of education. The Civil War—the revolution which brought the middle class to power—brought scientific ideas to bear for the first time on a system which still looked back to the Renaissance and the ideals of a classical education and was almost entirely under clerical influence.

But though the English revolution achieved its results in the political field and paved the way for the development of capitalism, in the educational world its theories were closely associated with Dissent, and the Puritan influence never penetrated Oxford and Cambridge. After the Restoration, the ancient universities and their satellite grammar schools resumed their old ways.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were still no regular schools for the children of the poor. Dame schools were available for those prepared to pay a small weekly sum to leave their children with unqualified minders, people often totally uneducated themselves. In some districts there were charity schools run by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION

It is often claimed that the Churches have been pioneers in the field of popular education, and indeed they were among the first to found schools. But they were more concerned with the propagation of their particular creeds than with opening up of opportunities for the mass of the people. The chief design of the Established Church was "the education of poor children in the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion as professed and taught in the Church of England." Another reason for this early interest in elementary education is given in a circular published by the S.P.C.K. in 1703: "It is manifest that a Christian and useful Education of the children of the Poor, is very necessary to their Piety, Virtue, and Honest Livelihood. 'Tis also plain and evident that Piety, Virtue, and an honest way of living

are not only of absolute necessity to their Happiness (the Poor) both Here and Hereafter ; but are necessary also to the Ease and Security of all People whatsoever ; Inasmuch as there is no Body but may stand in need of their help, or be liable to receive injuries from Them."

The Dissenters also started charity schools in the eighteenth century with the object first, of counteracting the influence of the Church of England and upholding Protestantism, and secondly, "to keep the Poor from being a nuisance to the State, etc." Thus over 200 years ago began the sectarian strife for the souls of the children which has done so much to stultify and arrest educational progress. "The first concerted effort of the Church of England to educate the poor was due as much to religious as to educational zeal. A study of eighteenth century educational history shows that the idea of proselytism was always present," writes Canon Braley.⁽¹⁾ The same might be said of the dissenting sects so far as elementary education was concerned.

Then came the industrial revolution. The opening of the machine age brought into being a new industrial working class—impoverished families driven into the towns to earn their living in the factories. Men, women and children worked long hours in appalling conditions, and in time the moral degradation resulting from mass exploitation, coupled with "the intellectual desolation produced by the transformation of immature human beings into mere machines . . . compelled the British Parliament to insist that, in all industries subject to factory legislation, the giving of elementary instruction should be an indispensable accessory of the 'productive' employment of children under 14."⁽²⁾

But before industrial schools were started the Churches had extended their work. The Sunday School movement, which had the advantage of providing for children on their free day and thus not interfering with their work, had had a certain success. Later, in 1808, the first foundations were laid of the British and Foreign School Society, a Nonconformist and reforming body favouring undenominational Christianity, of which the moving spirit was a young Quaker, Robert Lancaster. Three years later the Church party, not to be outdone, launched, at the instigation of the S.P.C.K. and leading churchmen, the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, with Andrew Bell as educational adviser. Both Bell and Lancaster adopted the monitorial system initiated by the former, whereby the pupils were set to teach each other. The schools they founded thus grew to an enormous size, while education had the saving grace of being extremely cheap if of a dangerously low standard.

Indeed, the contribution of the Churches to education at this point can best be judged on the somewhat doubtful assumption that some sort of schooling is better than none ; the elementary instruction given was mainly directed towards encouraging an interest in the Bible. One example of an arithmetic problem from an early National Society textbook is a good illustration : "The children of Israel were sadly given to idolatry, notwithstanding all they knew of God. Moses had to put three thousand men to death for this grievous sin. How would you express this number in digits ? "

(1) "A Polley in Religious Education," by Canon Braley.

(2) Karl Marx "Capital."

Nevertheless, the Church schools were the first regular elementary schools. Unfortunately, the religious bodies staked a claim in the educational field as a result, and even the gradual aims of reformers to obtain some sort of State aid and so to extend educational opportunity were defeated by acrimonious sectarian strife and vested interest. A Bill was introduced in 1807, another in 1820, several between 1820 and 1832, at least five more up to 1863—all had to be abandoned. Even the first Government grant for education voted "in aid of private subscriptions for the erection of school houses for the poorer classes" was divided equally between the rival religious bodies, and a later grant intended for the establishment of a model State school and training college went the same way. In this way the training of teachers also began on a sectarian basis.

THE CHARTIST MOVEMENT

Meanwhile the first disinterested demands for genuine popular education were making themselves heard. Men of the status of Tom Paine advocated generous assistance from State funds for education. Robert Owen gave education an important place in his programme for a co-operative social order, and attempted to put some of his own ideas into practice. Above all, the Chartist movement coupled educational programmes with its chief demands for manhood suffrage and a cheap press. The Chartists were under no illusions about the attitude to education. "Ministers and men in power, with nearly the whole body of those who are rich, dread the consequences of teaching the people more than they dread the effect of their ignorance," wrote Francis Place, a leading Chartist, in 1832.⁽¹⁾ This view is echoed thirty or more years later by an employer before the Children's Employment Commission: "As far as I can see, the greater amount of education which a part of the working class has enjoyed for some years past is an evil. It is dangerous, because it makes them independent."⁽²⁾

That the children of the working class were receiving hardly any education at all is proved by the reports of competent observers. The educational clauses of the Factories Acts allowed so many loopholes that compulsory part-time education of young workers under 14 was almost illusory. The Churches, concerned first and foremost with indoctrination, paid little attention even to the three R's.

The dying down of the Chartist movement in 1848 removed the one popular urge to education, but some of the impetus of the movement passed into organisations for the promotion of schools, public health, the franchise, and so on. The passing of the Reform Act, 1867, gave a helping hand to movements for educational reform, and by this time it was becoming clear that an illiterate working class was not in the best interests of industry and trade.

STATE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

In 1870 the first provision was made for State schools. The Liberal Government under Gladstone introduced a Bill requiring locally elected

(1) "Francis Place," by Graham Wallas.

(2) "Capital," by Karl Marx.

school boards to provide elementary schools where voluntary agencies could not meet the demand. In spite of its limitations, the 1870 Act introduced a new era in public education : for the first time there was to be a compulsory local rate for education, a representative local authority of a kind, and a limited form of compulsory attendance of children at school.

But the greatest discussions and dissensions again took place on purely theological points such as the conscience clause, putting religious instruction at the beginning or end of the school session and allowing parents to withdraw their children, and the famous Cowper-Temple clause, providing that no religious catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination should be taught in any Board school. The radicals won a limited victory on these points ; but, by failing to face up to the religious difficulty, the 1870 Act made the dual system (whereby the Church has partial control of elementary education) a permanent feature of the educational system. Various amending Acts were passed in the latter years of the century raising the age of compulsory attendance at school from 10 to 11, to 12 ; in 1900 local bye-laws were permitted raising the age to 14.

ADULT EDUCATION

Since the main opposition to any measure for education came from the House of Lords, it is not surprising to find that one of the first attempts to get a grant for adult classes in 1842 was turned down by the Upper House, largely owing to opposition from the Bishop of London, who objected to the omission of religious teaching from the syllabus. Various institutions grew up such as the Mechanics Institutes, which attempted to instruct the workers in scientific principles. Attendance at night schools fluctuated, but was never more than a few hundred thousand ; the grants given were infinitesimal. Again the Chartist movement had advanced the cause of adult education during its active life, but the impetus had flickered out. It was not until 1903, with the foundation of the Workers' Educational Association, that the tutorial class movement began.

THE UNIVERSITIES

However, the second half of the nineteenth century also saw the foundation of the colleges, later to become the modern universities, and of various institutions for technical and scientific education. The manufacturing classes were gradually becoming aware that the development and application of science were directly in their own interests ; new industrial processes meant new weapons against competitors and increased profits. Moreover, Germany was rapidly becoming a rival in the industrial field and her challenge must be met.

The ancient universities had gradually sunk into an abysmal state of sterility and decay. They had become the preserve of the aristocracy, and, completely cut off from any social movements, lived in an isolated world of barren learning. The only new life in the field of higher education had come as a result of the Civil War. The New Model Army is reported to have resembled a vast school, and the rank and file of soldiers satisfied their thirst

for knowledge by endless study and discussion. But the Puritans were barred by religious tests from Oxford and Cambridge which remained the strongholds of reaction, and the Dissenters Academies which they had founded, some of which were of a university standard, gradually disappeared as independent entities. Nevertheless, the modern and more scientific type of education provided by these establishments had an influence on other new secondary schools, while fear of competition from this new form of middle-class education was a spur to the old-established public schools to put their own house in order.

The modern universities derive their characteristics from this more scientific and utilitarian tradition. In 1826, with the foundation of University College, London, an institution of higher education appeared with fees within the reach of the middle class, no religious tests of any kind, and an important bias towards the humanities. In the following years, from 1851 until the end of the century, the other colleges which were later to become the modern universities came into being, and a new university tradition began to grow up side by side with the old.

GRAMMAR AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The inadequacy of secondary education also came up for review. There were only about 782 old endowed grammar schools in England and Wales, of which some 27 per cent. were classical schools, 23 per cent. semi-classical, and about 45 per cent. giving little more than elementary instruction. In fact, the schools giving a secondary education were as unrelated to modern needs as the ancient universities, largely because they were totally under their influence. Many had been founded with the express intention of feeding the universities.

While most of these schools were local in character, certain richly endowed foundations, such as Eton, Winchester and Westminster, had always been non-local, and others became so. The "public" schools had also become the preserve of the aristocracy by the nineteenth century, and gradually more and more upper-class children were sent to them as boarders.

The work of Dr. Thomas Arnold at Rugby (1828-40) had re-established their position, after the limitations of their curriculum and the lack of social discipline had brought them into disrepute, and Arnold's methods—directed towards the "training of character" and the development of a corporate life under the policing of the sixth form—founded a new ruling-class tradition of education.

The wealthy industrial class soon began to demand institutions of equal prestige for their own children, and the latter half of the nineteenth century saw a rapid development of the public school system. Eleven of the best-known public schools were founded between 1841 and 1867, and later schools provided specifically for the sons of officers, civil servants, doctors, clergy and lawyers—in fact the professional classes unable to pay the fees of the more expensive schools such as Eton. The middle and lower middle classes usually sent their children to grammar schools or one or other of the network of private boarding and day schools which had gradually grown up.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Recommendations for improved secondary education were coupled with a demand for central control. In 1899 the Board of Education was created, and in 1902 an Education Act passed creating the present local authorities. The new authorities for higher education (county and county boroughs) were to provide secondary schools, and a number of training colleges; grants were to be given to existing grammar schools; technical instruction was to be co-ordinated and developed.

Local education authorities also took over the Board schools and the task of maintaining Church schools. The 1902 Act strengthened the dual system by extending grants to the Church for all maintenance of schools, including teachers' salaries, and wear and tear; managers were only responsible for upkeep. Though they had to follow instructions concerning secular education, Church schools were enabled to continue with denominational teaching, and managers could appoint their own teachers, subject to the local authority's consent. These provisions, the result of an intensive Church campaign, provoked a storm from the Nonconformists, who strongly objected to the subsidising of sectarian teaching from the rates; refusal to pay the Education Rate was a frequent occurrence for some time afterwards, and some 70,000 prosecutions were made. By this time the majority of Church schools were Anglican.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

British industry took little interest in technical education, even though the system of apprenticeship was becoming less and less effective, until the Great Exhibition of 1851 drew attention to the superiority of foreign schemes of technical training. At the Paris exhibition of 1867 Great Britain only received prizes in 10 out of 90 departments, and a similar experience was to follow in 1878. The danger was already very great, and some improvements were introduced.

The debate on the 1902 Education Bill began on the same day that the Boer War ended. The Services were concerned about the defective education of the officer class, politicians were becoming painfully aware of the advances made in higher and technical education in Germany and America. "The relative ignorance of our people menaces our very national existence, as well as our industrial supremacy," said Mr. Asquith. An investigator records that "a wave of interest in elementary education was apparently sweeping over people not hitherto remarkably sensitive to its claims, and everywhere business men were regretting that city offices were forced to employ so many thousands of well-grounded and industrious German clerks for want of a home-grown substitute."⁽¹⁾ Co-ordination of the system of technical schools, and the beginning of the State secondary school system were the result.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE AND MEALS

Experience during the Boer War was also largely responsible for the foundation of the School Medical Service. Politicians who had been deaf

(1) "The Silent Social Revolution," by G. A. N. Lowndes.

to all pleas for the improvement of the children's health were impressed by reports that 4,400 potential recruits for the Army had to be rejected each year on the ground of defective teeth alone. Measures were also instituted for the segregation of defective children in separate schools. As the century advanced the declining birth rate and the "scarcity" of labour led to an enormous growth in the social services, an economic necessity if the labour force was to be maintained. The School Medical Service was closely followed by a measure empowering authorities to provide milk and meals.

THE TEACHING STAFF

What of the teaching staff? At the opening of this century there were still about 31,000 pupil teachers (aged 14-18) and some 28,000 assistant teachers who had had very little training. Of the 53,000 certificated teachers, just over half had received two years' training in training colleges, while the rest had only taken the Acting Teachers' Certificate examination. In 1895 to every 100 children on roll there was only one certificated teacher; there were 47.1 children to every teacher of all grades.

The average salary of certificated masters was £122. 6s. 7d., and of mistresses £81. 3s. 3d. Pensions were practically non-existent, and it is not surprising that the teaching profession did not have a very high standing. Teachers were more or less at the mercy of school managers, and were often forced to do extraneous duties of all kinds. Contemporary reports by H.M. Inspectors describe schools in which one teacher had to deal with 50 children from five different standards in one room; classes of 60 to 70 were the rule rather than the exception. The system of "payment by results" was largely responsible for the limitations of the teaching given, and after general condemnation from all sides had just been modified.

The methods of teaching under such conditions could only be of the mass production variety, methods well enough suited to the limited object of imparting a fixed amount of instruction with a coating of moral training. It has been said with some truth that the main achievement of the early elementary schools was the inculcation of discipline into hordes of children who had previously been running wild. There was practically no real education, as the term is understood now.

The influx of children into the new elementary schools created a demand for more teachers, though the improvement of training methods was slow. However, the acting teacher's certificate examination was abolished after the last war, and college trained teachers have been gradually substituted for untrained personnel. With the expansion of secondary education, graduate teachers have entered the elementary schools in increasing numbers. The institution of the Burnham salary scales and the passing of the Teachers' Superannuation Acts of 1918 and 1925—coupled with the improvement of school amenities and some reduction in the size of classes—marked a steady if slow improvement in the teacher's lot, and also, as a result, in methods of teaching. This century has also seen the founding and expansion of the teachers' unions.

CONCLUSIONS

While it may be said that during the nineteenth century science was making rapid progress and reason was making headway against superstition and dogma, and that a new tradition of education was brought into being by the foundation of the modern universities and secondary schools, these advantages still accrued mainly to the middle class. The working class was provided with only the minimum of instruction, and was taught only what it was considered good for them to know. Elementary schools, even when State aided, were still looked upon mainly as a charity. At the same time boys' clubs and other youth organisations were founded—with leaders and ideas from the ruling class; educational settlements were established in the slums where benefactors were able to indulge their charitable feelings towards the poor to their heart's content. It was not the right of all children to a full and free education that was recognised so much as the expediency of instructing and influencing the future industrial worker in the interests of production for profit.

The Twentieth Century

At the beginning of this century there were therefore two distinct forms of education operating side by side. The grammar and public schools leading to the universities and catering for a small minority of children, and the new elementary schools providing instruction for the mass of the people up to the age of 14. In spite of the institution and expansion of State secondary education this division has persisted.

There is now a network of private preparatory schools which prepare children for the Common Entrance examination prescribed by the public schools and taken at 13. In the elementary schools all children study for the Special Place examination allowing entrance to secondary school and taken at 11 plus, though only a fortunate few will pass into these schools. Those who remain in elementary schools after 11 are classed as "the residuc," and from these selection is made for the few places in junior technical schools, or, in some areas, for selective central schools; the remainder go to non-selective central or senior schools, where these exist, or else remain in the higher forms of the single elementary schools.

TWO PARALLEL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

An example can be given of the rigidity of the system. Free places in secondary schools, both the new State schools and those endowed grammar schools receiving State grants, were introduced in 1907 and the hope was then expressed that all places in secondary schools would eventually be free. Even this limited concession created a boom in the public schools. In the words of Sir Cyril Norwood: "the sons of local doctors, lawyers, parsons, and prosperous business men used to be found in the day school of their native place: they are now largely in boarding schools. . . . The parents were not moved by any objection to the

admission of the children of the poorer to the benefits of education, or any real belief that these children were of lower moral tone than their own; but they were quite determined that their own children should not pick up an accent."⁽¹⁾

The "public" schools, making the most of their opportunity, gradually drew a number of state-aided grammar schools into their orbit through membership of the Headmasters' Conference, and so strengthened their hand even more. (To-day there are 64,700 pupils in schools represented on the H.C., 38,200 of whom are in grant-aided schools and only 26,500 in independent schools). Their agitation had much to do with the fact that fees were never abolished in the grant-aided schools, and their prestige led to the slavish copying of the public schools tradition by the new secondary schools: a tendency also forced on them by the universities which set the external examinations.

In 1931 came the famous May Report which shamelessly stated: "Since the standard of education, elementary and secondary, that is being given to the child of poor parents is already in very many cases superior to that which the middle-class parent is providing for his own child, we feel it is time to pause in this policy of expansion." As a result, free places were abolished in 1932 and special places substituted; a general raising of the level of fees took place at the same time. Within a few weeks of this announcement the Board of Education was bombarded with 1,600 resolutions of protest and a heavy volume of correspondence. But the damage had been done.

THE FISHER ACT AND THE 1936 ACT

As with the State secondary schools, so with other attempts at reform. The main provision of the Fisher Act of 1918—the establishment of compulsory day continuation classes up to the age of 18—was never put into action: the school at Rugby has a melancholy interest as the sole surviving example. The other provision—the empowering of local authorities to provide nursery schools and classes—was virtually ignored; it has been left chiefly to voluntary bodies to establish these schools, of which there were before the war 114, accommodating altogether 8,864 children. (There are nearly 30,000 elementary school departments.)

The Fisher Act also instituted a compulsory school-leaving age of 14 on educational grounds; this principle established, there could be no educational reason for granting any exemptions. Eighteen years later this principle was flouted by the Education Act of 1936 (an Act which was to come into force in 1939, but was postponed owing to the war) by the insertion of a clause allowing exemptions, when the leaving age was raised to 15. This Act was the key-point of the National Government's programme of educational reform, announced in the election manifestos of 1935. The clause was opposed by the vast majority of educationists, but again with no effect. No provision was made for maintenance allowances for the extra

(1) "The English Tradition of Education," by Sir Cyril Norwood.

year at school. The 1936 Act also included a clause allowing grants up to 75 per cent. of the cost of rebuilding to church schools, being recognised as senior departments under the Hadow scheme of reorganisation.

HADOW REORGANISATION

The raising of the school-leaving age had been advocated by the Hadow Report on "The Education of the Adolescent," issued in 1926, in which the scheme of reorganisation of elementary schools into junior and senior departments, which has since become the official policy of the Board, was set out. The purpose was to provide a universal system of post-primary education—many more children were to go to secondary schools and the remainder to modern schools of much the same status.

Though the Hadow Report did not cut at the roots of the class distinctions in the educational system, it did at least point the way forward. But while the principle of reorganisation was accepted, the senior schools which have been built in various parts of the country are still under the same code of regulations as elementary schools, a vastly lower one than that of the secondary schools. In any case their educational programme can only remain a limited one so long as the leaving age remains at 14, and reorganisation has been by no means universal. In 1938, 13 years after the issue of the report, only 48.3 per cent. of children over 11 were in senior schools.

The slow progress of reorganisation is due, to a considerable extent, to the Churches. In 1938, of the total of 20,916 elementary schools, 10,363 were council schools with 3,540,512 children, and 10,553 voluntary schools with 1,546,973 children; of the latter, 8,979 were Church of England, 119 Methodist, 1,266 Roman Catholic, 13 Jewish, and 176 belonging to various bodies. The Churches are virtually unable to raise the funds to pay the cost of reorganisation themselves, even though 75 per cent. of this cost is paid by the State, but they are yet unwilling to allow their schools to be handed over to public control. They have therefore indulged in a policy of obstructionism, and the children must suffer. The President of the Board stated in April, 1942, that 62 per cent. of the children in council schools were in reorganised departments and only 16 per cent. of those in voluntary schools. Apart from this the Church schools are many of them in a totally unfit state; they constitute more than two-thirds of the schools on the official black list. An honest church school manager, in a letter to *The Guardian* on July 7, 1942, poses the question: "What is the use of teaching doctrine in an environment that shouts aloud at the doctrine taught; in an environment that condemns the Church as a parsimonious niggard, careless of the comfort and physical well-being of her children? Look at our ramshackle buildings realistically and try to compute their psychological effects. . . . I believe (this) to be far more the problem for the Church than even the legislative and doctrinal aspects of the question."

In the Church schools teachers are not appointed by the local authorities which pay their salaries, but by the semi-private bodies of managers who run the Church schools. Tests for teachers in these schools are the rule.

The following two advertisements illustrate the working of this system: "St. Peter's, London Docks. Male Assistant qualified to teach science and handicraft. Definite Anglo-Catholic"; "Certificated Headmistress for small village school. Willing to help in teaching the Faith to a warm-hearted people. Particulars from the Rectory, Cusby, Penrith."

In many cases children, of whatever denomination, have no choice but to attend the denominational school, though they may be withdrawn from the period of religious instruction. It has been estimated that in 4,141 parishes only an Anglican school is available, and in 13 others only a Catholic school.

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

The vast majority of teachers have now had a full secondary education and the number of university graduates in the teaching profession has been steadily increasing. The avenue of entry to the profession is normally through the two-year training college or the four-year university course. But in 1938 there were still 24,058 uncertificated teachers and 4,905 supplementary teachers in the elementary service, compared with 131,941 certificated teachers. The number of teachers lacking adequate training was therefore about 21 per cent. of the number of qualified teachers. The process of reducing the percentage of uncertificated teachers is a slow one since there is no ban on their employment.

Every year the Board of Education fixes an establishment of teachers for the whole country through the local authorities, and it is interesting to note that this figure progressively declined in the years preceding the war on the excuse that the child population was declining; it was 174,348 in 1933-34 and 168,878 in 1938-39. Yet the official policy of the Board is to reduce the size of classes, and one way of doing this would have been to maintain the establishment.

During 1938 the number of classes with over 50 children was 2,100, the number with over 40 was 42,481, and the number with over 30 was 54,198, out of a total of 145,281 classes. Modern teaching methods cannot possibly be effectively applied with such numbers. In addition over half the head teachers of elementary schools were still in full charge of a class, a factor which cannot contribute to the efficiency of the school.

Even in the secondary schools, where the normal limit to the size of classes is 30, there were 23.6 per cent. of classes had over this number. Roughly half the 25,039 full-time teachers in secondary schools were women, of whom 69.2 per cent. were graduates; of the men 86.9 per cent. were graduates.

Content of Education

The class basis of the educational system, which prevents all but a minority of children from receiving an adequate amount of education, is directly responsible for the fact that the education given is totally out of touch with modern needs.

Knowledge is power. The attempt to preserve power in the hands of a few necessarily leads to the perversion of education on a greater or lesser scale. The nineteenth century employers who objected so strongly to the meagre educational facilities then provided were no doubt haunted by the fear that reading the Bible could well become a step to reading Karl Marx. Thus they were concerned to see that any education given was calculated to indoctrinate certain ideas rather than to encourage initiative and independent inquiry. The examination system, the size of classes and the inadequacy of teachers' training have all helped to fasten this conception of education on the schools intended for the mass of the people. Meanwhile, in the public schools a totally different conception of education reigned and totally different methods were employed.

THE ACADEMIC TRADITION

After the Special Place examination the children who remain in the senior departments of elementary schools follow a completely different curriculum from that of the secondary school, in which a large place is given to "practical" activities. These schools are completely cut off from the universities.⁽¹⁾ The fraction of working-class children who are filtered through to the secondary school may safely be left to lose their class consciousness and become absorbed in the mass of the lower middle class.

The normal secondary school, strongly influenced by the academic tradition of the universities and public schools, but lacking their amenities, tends to produce diligent unquestioning clerks, to whom faithful copying of the words of teacher and text-book, later to be replaced by obedience to the orders of a superior, becomes the ideal. In the public schools a predominantly classical and literary education is supplemented by the kind of social training peculiar to these institutions and designed to produce rulers of men at home and in the Empire.

The present revolt against the arid fare provided, both in secondary and occasionally in public schools, is a symptom of the times, and is well illustrated by the following letter to the Press from a schoolboy. "Amongst my fellow members of the sixth form there is the liveliest desire to understand something of our present-day civilisation: of the workings and origins of the governmental system which is compelling many of us to join up immediately examinations are over. Not only are we interested in the origins of Western civilisation . . . we also wish to comprehend the trend of events from 1914 (the end of the present history syllabus) to the second world war, the better to perform our duties as good citizens in the years that will follow the peace. Instead of this 'the achievements of Gladstone's 1868-74 ministry,' the changes in Tory tradition between 1815 and 1850 occupy our attention—detail is crammed into us. We are 'amazed with matter,' but lacking in any wide comprehension of the general trend of world history and current affairs. We can write an essay on the theory of liberty, but have no practical ideas on the securing or use of it. . . . We have not been

(1) While it is necessary to stress that senior schools are a dead end as far as higher education is concerned, it must be noted that freedom from set curricula and examinations has led to much interesting experiment. Some senior schools are models of their kind, and show what could be done given more time and opportunity.

accustomed to any say (in educational problems) . . . had we been it is probable that Russia would have been honoured equally with America in a syllabus that would allow scope for opinion and originality, rather than slavish 'swotting' of restricted periods in distinct compartments."⁽¹⁾

It is true that science has gradually infiltrated the curriculum, but science has suffered the same fate as other branches of learning ; it has been castrated and reduced to a cypher. " Those privileged members of the community who have been through a secondary or public school education may be expected to know something about the elementary physics and chemistry of a hundred years ago, but they probably know hardly more than any bright boy can pick up from an interest in wireless or scientific hobbies out of school hours. As to the learning of scientific method, the whole thing is palpably a farce. Actually for the convenience of teachers and the requirements of the examination system, it is necessary that the pupils not only do not learn scientific method, but learn precisely the reverse, that is, to believe on the authority of their masters or text-books exactly what they are told and to reproduce it when asked, whether it seems nonsense to them or not. The way in which educated people respond to such quackeries as spiritualism or astrology, not to say more dangerous ones such as racial theories or currency myths, shows that fifty years of education in the method of science in Britain or Germany has produced no visible effect whatever."⁽²⁾

The academic type of education provided is usually excused on the grounds that all knowledge is equally valuable in itself, and that a mind trained in one subject can deal equally well with any other subject. It is this argument that the public schools have used to support retention of the classics as the core of the curriculum nearly half-way through the twentieth century. Thus the President of the Board of Education, speaking at Malvern College speech day on July 27, 1942, proclaimed that he who knew Latin could take the internal combustion engine in his stride. This convenient, though bankrupt theory excuses the study of any subject, such as economics or politics, likely to arouse controversy. Even history, as the sixth form boy quoted complains, ends politely before the last war.

The universities bear a great responsibility for this state of affairs, since they have been the main agents to spread these principles. It is often claimed that the function of the universities is the pursuit of absolute truth ; and this dictum has been carried to the point of absurdity by Nicholas Murray Butler, principal of Columbia University, who has paused for a moment in the chase to record the opinion that "students are only incidental" to this ultimate end. Yet while publicly setting their face against anything so vulgar as vocational education, the universities harbour the worst kind of narrow, specialised technical courses in their engineering and other faculties, designed to produce automatons rather than thinking men and women.

Thus the public schools and universities, while posing as the guardians of culture, in reality act as a brake on progress. Concerned mainly with the training of a restricted ruling class, they have clung to the old tradition of a cultural education : they are incapable of re-interpreting culture in terms

(1) Times Educational Supplement, July 18, 1942.

(2) " The Social Function of Science," by J. D. Bernal.

of the modern world. As a result they tend to kill culture by divorcing it ever more strictly from life.

SPECIALISATION

It is because knowledge and science are not being turned to the end of increasing the material and cultural well-being of the people, that education has come to be regarded merely as a means of "enriching the personality" or "training character," or "training the mind"—lacking all social purpose it becomes purely individualist in basis.

Because there is no unifying philosophy which recognises the laws of development of society, and therefore no principle making clear the relation between different branches of knowledge, learning becomes split up into "subjects"—whether history, English, science, or mathematics—which can be studied in complete isolation from each other and from their social background. Specialisation is one of the greatest evils of modern education. The separation between "cultural" and "vocational" education also widens—the former being concerned with enriching the individual, the latter, of a much lower prestige, concerned with the application of certain technical and scientific principles in a limited field.

The Menace of Fascism

Education is one of the most powerful aids to progress and universal education, equally available to all, is the strongest guarantee of democracy. Conversely restriction of educational facilities or differentiation in methods of education on a class basis is inimical to the extension of democracy and the raising of the standard of life. To-day there can be no standing still—if there is not a free development of education, both in terms of what is taught and of increased opportunity for all, the way is open for new restrictions and even for the perversion of education itself. The rise of Fascism has made this abundantly clear.

Fascism has a profound contempt for the mass of the people, and Hitler has explained more than once that the greater the lie and the more often it is repeated, the more readily will the people believe it. But at the same time Fascism is in mortal fear of culture and education.

The ruthless elimination by the Nazi Party of all that was best in German education was rapidly followed by the establishment of a system designed to enslave German youth from birth onwards. The importance accorded to this pernicious system of education is outlined by Rust, Nazi Minister of Education: "The German school in the Third Reich is an integral part of the National Socialistic order of living. It has the mission, in collaboration with other phases of the Party, to fashion and mould the National Socialistic Being according to Party orders."

The mission of the school is to inculcate the children of the nation with the lust for conquest and the desire for power over the weak, to eradicate all vestiges of science and learning and replace them by blind faith in the

Fuehrer and the Party, to undermine all feelings of human solidarity and bonds of affection by repudiating the ideas of liberty and equality.

The thoroughness of the system extends to the scientifically planned organisations for enslaving youth outside the schools: the Pimpf movement from 6 to 10, the Jungvolk from 10 to 14, the Hitler Youth from 14 to 18, where military training is added to the ideological and physical training of earlier stages. The conception of the role of women in society, as breeders of soldiers and household drudges, is behind the separate system of schools for girls in which they are mainly taught that their mission in life is to produce children for their Leader.

The principle behind the Nazi philosophy is that of the *Herrenvolk*—a ruthless ruling class leading the masses of its own country blindfold to the enslavement of other nations. "We want a selection of the new ruling stratum which realises that, by virtue of its racial superiority, it has the right to rule and ruthlessly to maintain and secure with all means its rule over the broad masses." Hitler has said. Here, too, a perverted education has been the basis: special Hitler Youth Schools, modelled on the public schools, have been founded for this exalted purpose.

Hitler's propaganda, with its emphasis on efficient economic and social organisation, is intended to prove that National Socialism incorporates the best aspects of socialism. In fact, the Nazis have initiated an even more acute class system whereby the mass of the people is completely deprived of all rights, threatened by brute force and terror, and misled by ideological indoctrination.

It is against this bestial system, the more dangerous because it uses modern science for its own perverted ends, that the people of this country are to-day united in the common purpose of victory. But it is essential to this victory that the greatest attention should be paid to scientific principles, that education should be extended to the widest sections of the people, that every effort should be made to safeguard the health and education of youth, and that any reactionary tendencies in the field of education should be strongly opposed.

Education Under Socialism

The magnificent resistance of the Soviet people to the onslaught of Fascism is due in no small part to the Soviet educational system, initiated four days after the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in 1917. In that first crowded week, while war was still sweeping the Continent and there was chaos at home, a far-sighted socialist programme of education was formulated.

It envisaged "the complete sweeping away of this (the Tsarist regime's) autocratically limited, pedantically inspired, class system of pedagogic dogmatism, in order to substitute for it a universal and classless provision of both 'enlightenment' and training for life in all its fullness and variety, for all ages from infancy to manhood; disregarding practically all ancient scholastic tradition; avowedly based exclusively on the latest

science in every branch, and free from every kind of mysticism; devoted to the end of fitting everyone for life in the service of the community; the whole system to be, in principle, gratuitous, secular and universally obligatory."¹ This programme not only outlined the ideas to be carried out, but also included specific proposals for the organisation of education at all stages. The magnitude of the task before them, and the impossibility of rapid initial progress did not deter the Soviet government. Improvisations were made, advances were gradually consolidated; the full programme laid down in 1917 may not have been entirely fulfilled by the time that Fascist aggression put a temporary stop to progress, but the success achieved is unprecedented in history.

No less than 46 new alphabets had to be created before the national minorities could be put on an equal footing in the educational programme. But in 1940 there were 34,000,000 children at school in the Soviet Union, compared with a bare 8,000,000 in 1914; there were 605,000 students in institutes of higher education, as compared with 112,000 in 1914. Of every 1,000 of the population slightly over 3.5 per cent. attend universities, and 18.4 per cent. are in some form of school organisation. There is a vast network of clubs and centres for out-of-school education. Apart from youth organisations there were in 1940 some 50,000,000 adults attending some kind of course in literary, musical, scientific or technical clubs.

Permeating the whole plan of education is the conception of culture as a means of self-improvement and self-development for the service of the community. Every known means of awakening dormant powers and stimulating development is used in the effort to make culture genuinely universal. This is the aim of the classless education system freely open to all.

The Soviet attitude to education and culture differs fundamentally from the attitude in this country. While here individuals are taught to increase their knowledge for their own ends, and given to understand that the more it is divorced from practical use the more valuable is their culture—in the Soviet Union culture is turned to the practical purpose of the transformation of the world, and the re-making of man to enable him to make the best use of his heritage. Education has a purpose, and a very clear one. It is vital, it looks ever forward, it is strongly opposed to all forms of mysticism and wedded to the scientific method.

It is only when capitalism has been replaced by socialism and a class society by a classless society that education can become free of the bonds which now fetter it. When there are no skeletons in the cupboard, and all men are united in the common purpose of advancing human knowledge and human happiness, indoctrination will give way to scientific methods of teaching, mysticism will give way to science, competition will be replaced by co-operation, and training for a station in life by training for life in all its aspects. Every child will have the world before him, instead of having his future decided according to the class into which he is born. Education will no longer be individualist, it will find a social

(1) *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation*, by S. & B. Webb.

purpose—the full development of the future citizen in the interests of himself and his fellows. It will no longer take refuge in bookish learning and abstract ideas, but will have as its basis the interpretation of the world and the practical application of knowledge for the good of all.

The history of education shows clearly the constant efforts that have been made to prevent the working class from understanding modern society and the part they play in it. But the working class have received much more powerful education in the school of life than they could ever have received in any academy. While their rulers have been occupied with ideas and theories in select and secluded universities and colleges, the young workers have been faced with hard and concrete facts in the factories and workshops. They can see the problems clearly: they have no prejudices; they come to realise that it is their task to bring about changes in society and that the future is theirs if they learn how to win it.

As this danger to the capitalist order becomes more real, so the strain in the schools and colleges becomes greater. Unless they decide to throw in their lot with the working class in the cause of socialism, educationists must either try to go on as usual by closing their eyes to what is happening in the outside world, or else fall in with the attempts to restrict education still further and to divorce it still more from actuality.

In the Fascist countries a final stage has been reached. Open war has been declared on culture and education, and the perversion of science has reached unprecedented heights. The Fascist attempt to dominate the world has led to world-wide war and an attack on the one great socialist country. Until this modern form of barbarism has been finally crushed there can be no talk of utopian socialist programmes. But the shape of the future and the final victory of socialism depends on what we do now.

Effect of the War on Education

The war has made many people aware of the deficiencies in the educational system, not only as a result of the initial disorganisation of the schools and the lack of trained man-power, but also because the war against fascism has thrown into clear relief the urgent need for a really democratic system of education.

Innovations have been made under pressure of events which point the way to future progress. There are now well over 50,000 children in emergency war-time nurseries; school-feeding schemes have been greatly extended; the schools have undertaken all manner of extra work for the war effort by collecting for National Savings and the Red Cross, keeping gardens to supply their canteens, rearing livestock, and so on; the need for further education is implicitly realised in the establishment of the Service of Youth, and hundreds of thousands of boys and girls are now receiving basic military and technical training in pre-Service units; the technical colleges have enormously increased the scope of their work, and the recently instituted engineering cadetships will increase it further; the universities have made many adaptations to meet the situation, and State bursaries in science have enabled many students to go up to the university

for technical and scientific courses ; the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts has brought a new conception of cultural education among the civilian population and pointed the way to an enormous increase of facilities for adult education generally, and the army education schemes have met an urgent need competently.

IMMEDIATE TASKS

But there is no reason for complacency. Events move fast and services have not yet kept pace ; the home front is not yet mobilised to the necessary extent. The education services can make a material contribution to the war effort.

The original evacuation scheme was both inadequate and unscientific, and though subsequent schemes have been an improvement, thousands of children have returned to target areas. With the prospect of possible renewed bombing attacks, adequate and well-planned measures in both evacuation and reception areas are essential.

Evacuated schools in the reception areas are often over-staffed and emergency schools in the evacuation areas under-staffed. Much difficulty is caused by differences in rates of pay in different areas and the lack of mobility of teachers between different authorities. Steps should be taken to ensure the greatest possible flexibility of organisation so that adaptations can be made to meet any emergency.

The provision of war-time nurseries and nursery classes has not kept pace with the demand, and in many cases women are still unable to go to work as a result. Conditions of staffing and organisation have now been clearly laid down, and intensive efforts are necessary to encourage the recruitment of helpers, speed up the training of staff and urge action on local authorities. The same is true of play centres for the older children before and after school hours and during the holidays. Children's clubs should be initiated where trained helpers or teachers can supervise handicrafts, stock-keeping, games and other out-of-school activities. Such clubs would do much to reduce the incidence of juvenile delinquency among the 13- and 14-year-old age group, which is largely due to the children having no alternative occupation and no place to play but the streets.

When children are released from school to help in agricultural work, the post office and other emergency war-time jobs, supervision must ensure that the regulations concerning wages, hours and conditions of work are strictly adhered to. While it is clear that children can and must give such assistance, vigilance is necessary to ensure that they are not made use of when other more suitable labour is available, and that the educational standards are not unduly lowered.

The development of the " Service of Youth " is hampered in many cases by rivalry and lack of co-ordination between voluntary organisations and sometimes lack of initiative on the part of local youth committees, most of which are composed of middle-aged members. In some districts youth councils representing young people under twenty have been formed, and the right of youth to a voice in the ordering of their affairs must be pressed in

every area. The old conception of "leading" youth still holds sway, coupled with out-moded ideas of what is "good for" young people. This must be replaced by co-operation on a basis of equality and the slogan "No politics" must give way to an active political education which is the right of all young people. Efficient pre-Service training should be available for all who can profit by it.

There are many demands for more political education in the Forces, and these must be met if the army education scheme is to have the best results. More intelligent programmes could be provided by the B.B.C. for men in the Forces, and better concerts and lectures arranged in some commands. Similarly, facilities are badly needed in some Civil Defence units, and the discussion groups initiated in the National Fire Service could be expanded and extended.

Much can still be done to key the universities to the highest state of efficiency, and to ensure that all students are contributing the maximum to the war effort.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM

It is vital that the education services should be as efficient as possible, and it is therefore important, in the interests of the war effort and of the future, that steps should be taken to promote the democratic development of the educational system.

The greatest single obstacles to a democratic system of education offering equality of opportunity are the public schools and the dual system. Yet the claims of vested interests in the Church and the independent schools are now receiving attention, quite apart from other vital questions of educational reconstruction.

The Church launched a campaign with the now famous Five Points of the Archbishops for increased religious instruction in the schools, the training of specialist teachers to give such instruction, and the empowering of H.M. Inspectors to inspect it. At the same time the Archbishop of Canterbury has intimated, and the proposals put forward by the National Society confirm, that the Anglican Church is not prepared to relinquish control of the majority of denominational schools and is also demanding safeguards in the shape of reserved teachers where those schools which are financially incapable of carrying on are handed over to the local authorities.

The question of dual control cannot be considered apart from other questions of educational reform, and until this problem is solved Hadow reorganisation will continue to be held up and children in denominational schools will suffer from inferior standards and lack of opportunity. There are few educational bodies that are not agreed that the dual system should go and that public money should be used for the benefits of the community as a whole and not of sectional interests.

The Free Churches are also opposed to the dual system and the subsidising of denominational teaching from the rates, and are prepared to accept the agreed syllabuses of religious instruction as the basis of the

teaching given in the schools. The Trades Union Congress has also supported the use of agreed syllabuses and declared its conviction that "denominational instruction of any kind should not be allowed in the State schools," and that no State grants should be made to denominational schools or colleges.

The University Labour Federation supports this view and is firmly opposed to any policy which would perpetuate the present divisions in the educational system and maintain or extend the principle of tests for teachers. Religion is primarily a personal matter, and while it will be agreed that all children should be taught, among other things, the background of the Christian religion and its contribution to the development of European civilisation, there is no justification for demanding that the State should disseminate particular creeds in the schools: such teaching is the responsibility of the Churches.

The public schools, for their part, have launched a campaign designed to prove that they have done inestimable service to the nation, that independence is essential to their continued contribution, and that State aid should be given to tide them over a difficult financial period without corresponding control; the possibility of admitting a few working class children in return for grants is entertained.

The foregoing survey of educational history serves to show that the public schools have of recent years done a serious disservice to the cause of British education. Their educational purpose and their educational method are equally bankrupt in terms of modern needs and they have had a retrograde influence on the development of the State schools.

The claim that independence of public control is essential for experiment and advance is an argument disproved by facts. In spite of the cramping bonds of the present system, numerous experiments have been carried on in nursery schools, in infants', junior and senior departments of elementary schools, and even in secondary schools, of which county schools are at least as good if not better than the direct grant schools. English education has a rich heritage from which to draw, and these experiments show that a new and virile tradition of education can be built up. But it can only develop if there is a genuine national system, designed to provide for all the nation's children and directed towards service to the community as a whole.

Again, the labour movement has declared in principle for a common primary school and multilateralism at the post-primary stage; grants to private schools have been opposed and inspection of all independent schools urged. The conception of a unified single system of education must be upheld against the official view of separate grammar, modern, technical and public schools at the post-primary stage—divisions which would perpetuate the existing class distinctions and continue to restrict the road to the universities.

A democratic programme for education must envisage the right of every child to a full and free education and to the full exercise of his training and ability in the public interest; a unified national system of

education, democratically financed and administered and with complete public control of all schools; a greatly improved and extended welfare service; and full and free access to all institutions of higher education.

The University Labour Federation therefore supports the programme put forward by the Council for Educational Advance, which is representative of the T.U.C., the Co-operative Union Education Committee, the N.U.T., and the W.E.A., and is pledged to work for immediate legislation to provide equality of educational opportunity. The Council sets out the following essential items for a new Education Bill and calls for support from all organisations interested in education:

1. The raising of the school-leaving age to 15 without exemption by the end of the war, and to 16 not more than three years later.
2. Free education under a single secondary code for all children after the primary stage.
3. Common standards of staffing, equipment and amenities in all schools.
4. Adequate provision of nursery schools and classes.
5. Free medical services and school meals.
6. Maintenance allowances for children in all post-primary schools.
7. Day continued education for all between 16 and 18.
8. Prohibition of employment below the school-leaving age and its control by the education authorities up to the age of 18.
9. The licensing and inspection of any school outside the national system.
10. A unified system of administration to replace the dual control of schools.
11. Free access to universities and higher technical colleges for all who can benefit thereby.
12. Ample provision for adult education.

THE STUDENTS' ROLE

The war and the tremendous problems raised by the war have, we have seen, brought about an interest in education in this country on a scale never known before. The widespread realisation that sweeping changes will have to be made in education in the post-war world has led to the very real possibility of legislative action now. This raises the whole issue very sharply, and means that a great responsibility falls on all sections of the people to ensure that adequate changes are made, and that our children may be assured of a decent education in the future.

It is not the purpose of this pamphlet to deal with the question of the universities, although it is obvious that much needs to be done in this sphere too. But clearly, the whole problem of education is one which is vital to all students, whether or not they themselves are going to be teachers. It is vital to them both as people who have a particular interest in all aspects of education, and who, passing through the last phase of organised education, can see more clearly than others the need for changes; and as future parents.

In the first place there must be widespread discussion on all the various proposals and programmes that have been put forward by the different organisations. Students must be well equipped to discuss and explain these proposals, both amongst themselves and to the general public, who will, to a certain extent, look to them for guidance on such subjects.

In addition, there are many ways in which students can take immediate action. A danger which will assume very large proportions in the near future, unless it is averted now, is the growing scarcity of teachers. If this shortage should become acute (and there are indications of this), fine plans and schemes for improved education would be seriously impeded. It is the responsibility of students to regard teaching as the important and honourable profession it is, and themselves to set the example to others by going into it in larger and larger numbers.

Linked with this is the question of the teachers' training colleges. The training colleges need to be brought into far closer contact with the student movement as a whole. At the moment the vast majority of them tend to be isolated, both from university life and from the life of the community. Yet they form an important part of the student movement, and just as they can become immeasurably strengthened by playing an active part in it, so they have a real contribution to make towards it. Similarly, education students must see themselves clearly as members of the community and as people who are going to supply one of the most vital services to the country as a whole.

All problems concerning training students must be seen in the light of the need for teachers and those who will become teachers to come more closely into contact with the people and to help to answer their needs. This is the spirit in which the pressing questions of curricula reform, improvement of courses and of general conditions should be regarded. The touchstone for them all must be whether such and such a reform will help to make the student a better teacher and to provide the children of this country with a better education.

The last point is one that cannot be stressed too much. It is that students, of all sections of the people, have a special responsibility to take an active interest, here and now, in the problem of education. Not only must they know and understand the problem; they must be prepared to act, if necessary to fight, for a better educational system. It must be remembered that it is not only the progressive forces in the country which are concerned with the question of education; there are still people (and many of them) who would like to see the old framework of the present system retained, and who will cling to that system with all their might. It is because of these powerful elements that it is so necessary for students to understand that it is only by working out a policy for action (as outlined in this pamphlet), and by uniting the largest number of people on this policy, that they will achieve the changes which are so essential. And they can be assured that in uniting for this, they will be striking a heavy blow at the forces of Fascism and of reaction.

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Education and Social Change :</p> <p>A New Order in English Education :</p> <p>The Old School :
Education for a New Society :</p> <p>Man Makes Himself :
The Silent Social Revolution :</p> <p>The Future of Education :</p> <p>The People's Schools :
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" Labour Monthly," Feb., 1943</p> | <p>F. H. Birchenough : University
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Programmes and Recent Pamphlets

- Conservative Party Report : Looking Ahead.
- Labour Party Report.
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- Report of the T.U.C., 1942.
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- School for Barbarians : E. Mann : Lindsay Drummond.
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- The Axis Oppression of Education : Inter-Allied Information Committee
(H.M.S.O.).
- The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism : R. Brady : Gollancz.

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| <p>Children in the Soviet Union :</p> <p>Changing Man :</p> <p>Education in the Soviet Union :</p> <p>Soviet Communism : (Sections of)</p> <p>Education in the U.S.S.R. :</p> | <p>D. Levin : Faber & Faber.</p> <p>B. King : Gollancz.</p> <p>B. King (Study-Outline, S.C.R.).</p> <p>S. and B. Webb : Longmans Green.</p> <p>(Study-Outline of the Anglo-Soviet Youth
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